

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 19th March, 2009.

Present: Cllr Ken Lupton (Chairman); Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Alex Cunningham, Cllr Terry Laing, , Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson and Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey.

Officers: N Schneider (CE); J Danks (RES); S Daniels (DNS); P Seller, R Kench, L King (CESC); D E Bond, M Waggott, P K Bell (LD).

Also in attendance: Cllr Allan Lewis.

Apologies: Cllr Jennie Beaumont.

CAB 169/08

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Cunningham declared a personal prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 4 - Local Area Agreement Annual Review and Refresh due to his employment in the energy industry.

CAB 170/08

Efficiency, Improvement & Transformation Programme

Members were reminded that its meeting held on 19th February 2009, Cabinet approved proposals to implement a three year programme of efficiency and improvement reviews across all of the Council's activities. This was a direct response to the need to refine current approaches to performance and financial management in the light of recent changes to the national economy and its impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

Every aspect of the Council's work needed to be covered by the review programme, and following consideration of the most suitable topics for inclusion in Year 1 (which included suggestions received from Members and officers during seminars, drop ins and consultations), a proposed programme had been identified and was provided to Members for their attention.

It was explained that the Scrutiny Liaison Forum, at its meeting held on 26th February 2009, had given consideration to delivery of the Scrutiny Programme with a view to identifying EIT topics to be the subject of in depth scrutiny by the Council's Select Committees as part of their 2009/2010 Work Programme; the following priorities were proposed:-

Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee -
Communication, Consultation and Engagement

Health Select Committee - Fair Access to Care

Children and Young People Select Committee - Child Placements and Residential Care

Regeneration and Transport Select Committee - Commissioning and Provision of Public and Community Transport (incorporating bus subsidies and Dial a Ride)

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee - Regulation and

Enforcement

Environment Select Committee - Commercial Trading Services

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee - Three Gateway Reviews

In addition Scrutiny Liaison Forum identified appropriate reviews to be conducted by Officers and subjected to Gateway Review by a Select Committee at key stages. The following reviews were proposed:

- * Adult Day/ Residential Care;
- * Highways, Lighting and Network Management (including road safety);
- * Property and Facilities Management.

The remaining topics identified by Scrutiny Liaison Forum as Officer Reviews suitable for reporting into Executive Scrutiny Committee at Key Stages were proposed as follows:-

- * Advice and Information Provision;
- * Youth Services and Provision;
- * Domestic Violence;
- * Communication, Consultation and Engagement.

It was noted that regular progress report of the EIT programme would be submitted to Cabinet and Executive Scrutiny Committee.

In order to support Select Committees undertaking reviews as part of the programme, there would be a need for specialised training for all Members.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The content of the Year 1 Efficiency Improvement & Transformation Programme, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. The proposed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2009/2010 submitted by the Scrutiny Liaison Form for consideration and approval at the next meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee on 24th March be noted.

CAB **Local Area Agreement (LAA) Targets**
171/08

Cabinet was reminded that the Local Area Agreement was a performance contract between the Council and its partners, through Stockton Renaissance and the Government. It set out how the Council and its partners would deliver the key objectives within the Sustainable Communities Strategy in line with agreed priorities and was approved by Cabinet in May 2008. All LAAs are subject to an annual review and refresh process. This was undertaken by Government Office for the North East on behalf of Central Government and was due to receive ministerial signoff at the end of March 2009.

Members were provided with a table showing measures currently held within the LAA (Appendix 1 to the report). These were the same measures as those originally negotiated for year 1 of the LAA, indicating no changes to priorities but

where targets had been renegotiated or baselines changed, these were shown in *Italics*. Also included were the original negotiated targets and baselines, so that any changes were clear. The commentary reflected why targets had been renegotiated. Targets highlighted in bold remained to be signed off through Government Office.

Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government indicated that the review and refresh process was clearly focused on a limited range of objectives; ensuring strong delivery arrangements were in place; reviewing new performance information relevant to the LAA and relevant contextual information; setting targets for the limited number of indicators where the definitions were not finalised at the time the 2008-2011 LAA was signed-off.

The intention of the 2009 refresh was to support progress towards success on the established LAAs, not to signal changes in direction.

Cabinet noted progress against the 2008 – 2011 LAA and it was explained that Government Office North East considered that Stockton had made good progress with developing and bedding down delivery arrangement across the majority of the designated targets. The strong performance culture was acknowledged and there was evidence of innovative practice. Stockton's approach to delivery planning was identified as being robust and inclusive and the Local Strategic Partnership was identified as being strong and inclusive.

The potential impact of the economic climate on achieving some of the targets has been the subject of discussion with our partners, the Local Public Service Board and GONE with the outcome that it is too early to tell what the overall impact of the current economic climate will be across a range of the indicators within the LAA. It has been agreed that those measures affected by the current economic conditions will be the subject of further, more informed discussions, at the end of year 2 of the agreement and that the aspirations set out in the original agreement would remain in place for the time being.

Members noted that 3 designated targets had not been set during 2008 - 11 negotiations but had been negotiated as part of the refresh. A further 8 targets had been renegotiated due to changes to baseline data, changes to definitions and the Place Survey results being published in February 09. These measures were provided:-

- * NI 11 Engagement in the Arts
- * NI 110 Young People's participation in positive activities
- * NI 187 Tackling Fuel Poverty
- * NI 1 The % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- * NI 5 Overall Satisfaction with the local area
- * NI 15 Serious Violent Crime
- * NI 17 Perceptions of Anti Social Behaviour as a problem
- * NI 130 Social Care Clients receiving Self Directed Support
- * NI 162 Number of entry level qualifications in numeracy achieved.
- * NI 195 Improved levels of litter
- * NI 198 Children travelling to school by car

RESOLVED that:-

1. The information in the report and the assessment of GONE in relation to progress against the LAA be noted.
2. The refreshed targets indicated in Italics at Appendix 1 be approved and approval of the outstanding targets be delegated to the Chief Executive.

CAB 172/08 Children & Young People's Plan 2009-2012

Members were provided with a copy of the proposed Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2012.

The Plan had been developed following extensive consultation with partner agencies and organisations with inputs from children and young people, parents and carers through the course of this last year.

Cabinet noted that it was a statutory requirement on Children's Services Authorities to prepare and publish a plan, setting out their strategy for discharging their function in relation to children, young people and their families.

It was explained that a Children and Young People's Plan could cover any time-period and there was no formal structure for plans proposed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. There was a requirement though to review the plan on an annual basis.

Stockton-on-Tees Children's Trust Board had proposed that the plan continue as a three-year plan, with annual reviews. The structure of previous and existing plans had been commented on positively by all stakeholders, so this had been maintained in the new plan.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families was proposing new statutory regulations for the production of Children and Young People's Plans. It was anticipated that this would be produced during 2009/10 and enacted in 2011/12.

The major implications of the new statutory regulations were likely to be that the plan would become a statutory plan on all relevant partner agencies and organisations and that a new plan would need to be produced for 2011 and beyond, to fit with the new regulations.

The new regulations are also likely to put Children's Trust Boards into a statutory framework. The details and implications of the new regulations will be reported to a future Cabinet, following their publication and enactment.

The Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012 set the vision and key priorities for the Children's Trust Board and identified the key actions to be taken to address those priorities. The key actions were primarily in the form of other strategies and action plans, which supported the overall Children and Young People's Plan. These provided the detailed actions to deliver on the priorities and would be monitored and overseen by the range of partnership groups, sitting under the Children's Trust Board.

This suite of strategies and action plans would be in place and available on a 'CD' and through the Children's Trust Board Website in April 2009.

The Children's Trust Board, at a special meeting on 10 March 2009 received the plan and recommended its approval to Cabinet and Council.

The Children and Young People's Plan would also be the basis of the Service Improvement Plan for the Children and Young People's Section of CESC's Service Improvement Plans.

The final version of the plan would be graphically enhanced through work with young people before it was published.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2012 be approved.

CAB Council Plan and Service Improvement Plans 2009-2012
173/08

Cabinet considered a report that detailed the Council Plan and Service Improvement Plans 2009 – 2012.

It was noted that the Council Plan set out how the Council would contribute to community objectives. The plan is based on the objectives and outcomes already set in the Sustainable Community Strategy, but provides focus on the key objectives we need to achieve authority wide, and which need to be monitored by Corporate Management Team and the Cabinet.

The focus of the plan shifts each year as the Council's key improvement priorities alter over time. Members noted that it was a three year rolling plan which was updated on an annual basis.

Service Improvement Plans support the Council Plan by setting out how key priorities and objectives would be delivered, and their resource implications. The plans also included information about each service area and its achievements.

The 2009-2012 Council Plan contained two main parts. The first was a narrative explaining about the Borough, the Council, its achievements and future plans. This was supported by the second main part – an action plan which set out how the objectives and priorities of the Council would be delivered.

The objectives within the 2009-2012 Council Plan had changed from 2008-2011 to take account of:-

- * New and emerging national policy and legislative requirements
- * The current economic climate and its impact on local communities and services
- * The development of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation Programme
- * Outcomes from the annual review and refresh of the Local Area Agreement

The plan had been developed in partnership with:-

- * Councillors – through seminars on the budget and Council Plan and through "drop in" sessions for Members to discuss the plan with officers
- * Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service and Policy Officers through joint working to develop the plan

The intended audiences for the Council plan were:-

- * The authority itself including elected members and officers (primary audience)
- * The Government, because the plans contain essential information enabling it to monitor performance (secondary audience)
- * The public in order that there is visibility and transparency about what the Council's objectives and targets are.
- * Key partners, to facilitate joined up approaches to making a difference to the lives of local residents where appropriate.

The measures that were included in the Local Area Agreement were also included in the Council Plan to provide officers and members with a joined up local performance framework.

The service planning framework was reviewed in 2005 and a revised framework put into place to focus on changes and improvements and to bring service and resource (finance, human resources, ICT, procurement) planning closer together. SIPs include the key changes, improvements and priorities which will require significant attention from heads of service to deliver. Core business in each service is covered in business unit plans which sit beneath the SIPs.

Plans had been developed to cover all service areas. In some areas it had been sensible to develop combined SIPs covering more than one head of service's remit e.g. Children's Services. Performance against SIPs would be monitored and reported to Members twice a year, alongside Council Plan monitoring.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. The draft Council Plan and Service Improvement Plans for 2009 – 2012 be approved.

2. Approval of the Council Plan and Service Improvement Plans be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Lead Cabinet Member.